

The After-Fate of the Kingdom
431

Like Maio before him, the Chancellor had to be sacrificed to party and Stephen at last (summer, 1168) departed for the Holy Land, renouncing his office and his see.

Again for the rest of the Regency there were no chancellors but only a vice-chancellor, the Notary Matthew of Ajello, a typical bureaucrat. Walter Ophamil, Archbishop of Palermo, was included in a Council of Ten which directed the government, and which was successful in eliminating the noble class out of the inner circle of administration.

William II. commenced to reign alone in 1171. The character of this last of the legitimate Hautevilles is an enigma—a recluse seldom appearing in public, never seen at the head of armies, devoted to Palermo, surrounded in his summer palaces by eunuchs, concubines, and negro guards, familiar with Arabic speech and learning, the builder of Monreale and La Cuba—he yet gives the impression of a great personality; he revives Roger's policy of conquest, he restores the kingdom, and directs from the seclusion of his seraglio a wide-reaching and highly-successful diplomacy. He is "William the Good," a King whom all classes revere and love; to the historian Romuald he is

"justitiiz et ceyuitatis amator," to Dante
he is in
tradition numbered among the just
men of the
world¹; to Arab travellers like Ibn-
Jubair he is

*"E quel die vedi nell' arco declivo
Guglielmo fu, cui quella terra plora
Che piange Carlo e Federico vivo. '